

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request further examination and reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the comments set forth fully below. Claims 1-31 were pending. Within the Office Action, Claims 1-10, 12, 16-26 and 28 have been rejected and Claims 11, 13-15, 27 and 29-31 have been objected to. By the above amendment, Claims 1 and 16 have been amended and Claims 11 and 27 have been canceled. Accordingly, Claims 1-10, 12-26 and 28-31 are now pending.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Within the Office Action, Claims 1, 3-5, 12, 16, 18, 20, 21 and 28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,097,859 to Solgard et al. (hereinafter referred to as “Solgard”). Also, within the Office Action, it is indicated that Claims 11, 13-15, 27 and 29-31 include allowable subject matter. By the above amendment, the independent Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations from the original Claim 11 and Claim 11 has been canceled. Accordingly, the independent Claim 1 is allowable over the teachings of Solgard.

Claims 3-5 and 12 are all dependent on the independent Claim 1. As discussed above, the independent Claim 1 is allowable over the teachings of Solgard. Accordingly, Claims 3-5 and 12 are all also allowable as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

By the above amendment, the independent Claim 16 has been amended to include the limitations from the original Claim 27 and Claim 27 has been canceled. Accordingly, the independent Claim 16 is allowable over the teachings of Solgard.

Claims 18, 20, 21 and 28 are all dependent on the independent Claim 16. As discussed above, the independent Claim 16 is allowable over the teachings of Solgard. Accordingly, Claims 18, 20, 21 and 28 are all also allowable as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Within the Office Action, Claims 2, 6, 17 and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Solgard. Claims 2 and 6 are dependent on the independent Claim 1. Claims 17 and 22 are dependent on the independent Claim 16. As discussed above, the independent Claims 1 and 16 are both allowable over the teachings of Solgard. Accordingly, Claims 2, 6, 17 and 22 are all also allowable as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

Within the Office Action, Claims 7-10 and 23-26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Solgard in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,694,072 to Neukermans et al. Claims 7-10 are dependent on the independent Claim 1. Claims 23-26 are dependent on the independent Claim 16. As discussed above, the independent Claims 1 and 16 are both allowable over the teachings of Solgard. Accordingly, Claims 7-10 and 23-26 are all also allowable as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

Within the Office Action it is indicated that Claims 11, 13-15, 27 and 29-31 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. As discussed above, Claims 11 and 27 have been canceled by the above amendment. Claims 13-15 are dependent on the independent Claim 1. Claims 29-31 are dependent on the independent Claim 16. As discussed above, the independent Claims 1 and 16 are both allowable over the teachings of Solgard. Accordingly, Claims 13-15 and 29-31 are all also allowable as being dependent on an allowable base claim.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments, they are encouraged to call the undersigned at (408) 530-9700 to discuss the same so that any outstanding issues can be expeditiously resolved.

Respectfully submitted,
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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING (37 CFR § 1.8(a))

I hereby certify that this paper (along with any referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service on the date shown below with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to the: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

HAVERSTOCK & OWENS LLP
Date: 8/10/05 By: J. O. Owens